

FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE:

Friday, November 30, 1956
7:00 p.m.

"The ability to set aside partisan considerations in a common effort is one of the factors that makes our system of collective bargaining work," Joseph F. Finnegan told a large gathering of labor and management representatives at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville tonight.

At the First Annual Conference on Current Trends in Collective Bargaining co-sponsored by the University of Tennessee and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Finnegan was the featured speaker at the banquet Friday night.

He said that the collective bargaining process as it functions in the United States is "an integral part of the American way of life because its objective is to get greater benefits for more people and the means used is the exercise of the rights of free men."

In drawing a parallelism between mediation on the domestic scene and the international scene, the Mediation Chief discussed the recent United Nations condemnation against "acts of aggression unacceptable to a modern world. It is true that the United Nations does not presently have the ability to use force to counter force. And perhaps this is as well in the long run; for power and force, however and by whomsoever used, cannot be transformed into morality or justice. Inevitably, men's minds must turn to negotiated settlements of

international disputes as the only reasonable alternative to the use of force. Just as in our system of collective bargaining, mediation has been found as a workable alternative to the weapon of strike and lockout, so is mediation becoming more useful in the field of international relations."

"The parallel between labor relations and international relations is accentuated because nations are independent, just as management is independent and labor is independent. It is thus that disputes in the two fields are appropriate for the processes of mediation; for it is the essence of a mediated settlement that independent parties in conflict, after appraising the available and practicable alternatives, are brought eventually into voluntary agreement."

In referring to the nature of mediation, he said, "It is nothing by itself. As a part of a voluntary process for resolving disputes by agreement, it is significant because its function is to assist and guide people in behaving like rational and responsible members of a free society. Its importance in our contemporary industrial society is evidenced by the use that unions and managements ever-increasingly make of it."

He concluded by saying, "I am convinced that not only does collective bargaining have a place in the American way of life, it is an essential structural member of the American way of life. Let us pray that our example will be a guide to the world that a means does exist for the peaceful settlement of fundamental and legitimate disputes. With such a prayer we can look forward to a more peaceful world than we see today."